A CAPSULED FAMILY HISTORY
OF
SIDNEY BARNETT MCCOLLUM AND NANCY RADFORD

Sidney Barnett McCollum, son of Thomas Marion McCollum and Sarah Jane Bigham McCollum, was born November 1, 1862, in Carroll County, Tennessee.

Nancy Radford, daughter of John T. and Elizabeth Bond Radford, was born December 13, 1863, in Martin, Tennessee.

They were married February 26, 1885.

To this union, seven children were born.

Beatrice Evelyn was born August 7, 1887, and died October 22, 1888.

William Elbert was born September 12, 1889, and died May 18, 1976.

Fannie Estelle was born April 13, 1892, and died January 20, 1961.

LuElla was born August 19, 1894.

Amy Esther was born October 6, 1896, and died March 27, 1984.

Barnett U. was born February 21, 1899.

Ila Ethel was born September 25, 1901.

The ensuing pages are written with the hope that additions will be made and memories will be saved to share with the future generations of the McCollums.

Though not professional, this has been a labor of love. As I talked with the family members, it made me "proud to be a McCollum."

LuElla and Ila did a good job on their autobiographies, so I just added an observation or so. Any inaccuracies are accidental.

June McCollum Wood (daughter of William Elbert)

SIDNEY BARNETT MCCOLLUM

Sidney Barnett McCollum, son of Thomas Marion McCollum and Sarah Jane Bigham McCollum, was born November 2, 1862, in Carroll County, Tennessee.

He was the second son of Thomas and Sarah Jane. He had five brothers, two full sisters, and one half-sister.

He was a farmer, a very good one. He had the knack for growing strawberries, watermelons, and Elberta peaches. He would gather his fruits and vegetables, take them to Conway and sell them house to house.

Sid moved his family to Arkansas in the early 1890's. He went back to Tennessee for one year, but moved to Arkansas once again, never to leave.

The family lived in several communities around Greenbrier, where the last four children were born.

He was not a church-going man in his younger years, so, on Sunday, he and his brothers, Frank and Joe, would get together and pitch horseshoes and visit. He didn't object to his children attending the local Baptist church.

When he was in his late 40's, he was converted and joined the Baptist church. He never cared for Sunday School, but would attend almost every preaching service. He was generous "to a fault." Although money was scarce, he would give his last dollar if he thought the church needed it.

He was much loved in the community, where most referred to him as "Uncle Sid."

After the death of Nan, in 1913, he kept the family together. As was the custom, Fannie, the eldest daughter, kept house for them, then married a year later. LuElla took over the responsibility of housekeeper for the next eight years.

He never found another woman to share his life. Therefore, when one of the family was not living with him, he "batched." The grandchildren who were fortunate enough to "stay all night with Grandpa" can attest to his ability to fix the food just like it should be.

His nephews from Conway, Dr. Isaac McCollum's sons, would come out to the farm each summer and spend a few weeks. They were supposed to help chop cotton and do the other chores. He had lots of patience with them. He insisted that his children get every blade of grass out of a row and leave it neat; however, when the guests would just "hit and miss," he just went back and cleaned it up for them. Of course, that didn't set too well with his own, but they were too well-trained to make a scene.

Every year, in July, after the crops were laid by, the family would go camping at Pinnacle Springs. That was their vacation. Nothing to do but fish, swim, and exploring. Sid realized the importance of relaxation.

He wanted his children to have as much education as possible. All of them either taught school or were qualified to teach.

He taught by precept and example. When he lent money to any of the children, it had to be paid back. It was for their own good. Some of them did have to borrow in order to continue an education or buy some land, but, to a dollar, it was all paid back.

Sometime around 1919, he and his eldest son, Elbert, bought 120 acres together. They farmed together until Elbert's marriage in 1929, at which time they divided the land. He kept the 60 acres to the East that had the house. Elbert took the other and built a new house on that land.

Since he was getting on in years, and lived alone, Ila, the youngest daughter, and her husband, Bernard Zellner, moved in to take care of him.

In 1937, Ila and Bernard bought the home place. They cared for him until his death on November 13, 1937.

There are many fond memories of Sid. His ever-present beard comes to mind. For as long as anyone can remember, he had a beard. When he was young, it was black and bushy. As it turned gray, he trimmed it to hang just below his chin. He was the only one in the immediate family with blue eyes. The children inherited Nan's brown eyes.

He always drove a buggy. At the time of his death, he still had a buggy and a horse named "Ol' Kate."

He is buried alongside his beloved Nan in Spring Hill Cemetary.

NANCY RADFORD MCCOLLUM

Nan Radford was the fourth child born to John T. Radford and Elizabeth Bond Radford. She was born on December 13, 1863, in Martin, Tennessee. She had two sisters and four brothers.

On February 26, 1885, she married Sidney Barnett McCollum.

She was never very strong physically, but she was a good wife and mother. Her children all turned out to be first-class citizens.

She was a small woman, about four feet ten inches tall, and at age 49 still had a 25-inch waistline. One of her dresses, still in family possession, indicates just how tiny she was.

Her photos show her to be a beautiful lady with lots of dark hair and dark eyes.

As the girls grew up, it became their job to brush their mother's hair daily. They took turns with this ritual. She wore it up on top of her head with a large comb holding it in place.

She did the sewing and knitting until the older girls learned those skills, then she turned that chore over to them.

Every Saturday, she baked bread for the next week. Her other cooking was excellent. Elbert thought her sweet potato pudding tasted better than anything in the world. No one could remember the exact ingredients, but it was made with grated sweet potatoes, black walnut meats, eggs, milk, and flour for thickening. All of us have, at one time or another, tried to duplicate the flavor, but somehow it came out lacking that certain something.

She was hospitable. Once, when a "peddler" came by, she invited him in for dinner, which included fresh blackberry cobbler. The salesman had dentures and told her, "I'd love to have some of that cobbler, but I'm afraid I'll get the seeds under my plate." He was persuaded to eat some of the pie anyway. After he and Sid went out on the porch to visit, Ila picked up the dinner plate and remarked, "Well, he didn't get any seeds under his plate this time."

She was a strong moral person. No cards could be brought into the house. The literature had to be of the highest quality. She really encouraged her children to get an education.

In her day, the women only attended church during a revival. They were expected to stay home and fix Sunday dinner. However, Nan was always praying for her children.

Although she was sprinkled as a baby, she didn't believe in infant baptism. She wanted to be baptized into the Greenbrier Baptist Church when Sid, Elbert, Fannie, and LuElla were, but was too ill to do so.

Sometime in the early 1900's, Nan became sickly. They diagnosed her illness to be Tuberculosis. Some of the neighbors thought her to be contagious, and in her final months, stayed away.

She died in 1913 on Sid's birthday.

Her influence is still felt in the second and third generations.

As the other life histories and autobiographies unfold, many other incidents about Nan will be recalled, especially with Ila, since she was the child who stayed at the house with her during her last months, and had a good insight into her character.

WILLIAM ELBERT MCCOLLUM

September 12, 1889 was the birth date of the first son born to Sidney Barnett and Nancy Radford McCollum. He was named William Elbert. The family always called him "Elbert." Martin, Tennessee was his birthplace.

The family moved from Tennessee to a farm just east of Greenbrier, Arkansas. There he got his first six years of schooling at the Blair School House. They then moved to Greenbrier where he finished high school.

Elbert was saved just before his nineteenth birthday, and was baptized in a creek east of Greenbrier. (His baptism, along with other family members, is mentioned elsewhere.)

He loved gospel music. When he was a teenager, he was impressed with his friends who had been taught to read music, and could look at a new song and sing it. He decided to learn to do the same thing. He went to some singing schools and subsequently taught in Faulkner County.

He also went to penmanship school to learn to write properly. His ability to make his penmanship unique continued to be a source of pride through life.

In 1917, he went into the Army. He served as a runner in France during World War I.

When he got back home from the Army, not only did he farm with his dad, he decided to cut lumber. That didn't bring in a lot of cash, but he did clear some bottom land, where he later raised cotton.

He stayed in the National Guard after his discharge. It was in Little Rock, when he was there for a Guard meeting, that he met his first wife. She had an apartment in the home of his aunt, Sara Coe. Sara introduced them, saying, "This is a widow, Iva Martin."

Although he had dated several women over the years, he never found one that exactly suited him. Apparently, it was a "love at first sight" meeting. In a few weeks, he popped the question, if you could call it that. According to Iva, he said, "I want those pretty white hands to make my biscuits every morning."

In marrying Iva, he not only took a wife, but two step-daughters, Mary and Ida, plus Iva's mother, who lived with them for the next nineteen years, when Iva died.

He built a house for the family, starting with two rooms. Later, another room and porch was added, but the Great Depression didn't allow for anything but basics. It was here that his only child, a daughter, Dortha June, was born, on a rainy New Year's Day in 1930.

For the first few years after they were married, he and Iva taught singing schools at Wooster and Pleasant Valley. He used some of his "bonus money" to buy a piano, and encouraged the girls to learn to play. Mary took lessons from Mrs. Callie Brummett, then later on, taught others. June learned to play by ear, then took lessons and learned to read and write music. Ida was not interested in music, so never learned to play the piano or sing.

In 1938, Iva became ill, and was never able to do outside work again.

That same year, Mary went to Denton, Texas, and attended Texas State College for Women, and Ida married Leonard Brannon.

As was customary for all farmers in that part of the country, Elbert raised Irish potatoes for the Spring money crop, and cotton for the Winter money crop. In the Winter, he would cut firewood off the bottom land he owned and sell it. He had a cutoff saw rigged up and could put out quite a lot of sticks in one day.

Each Sunday morning and night, the whole family would attend Sunday School and preaching service at Spring Hill. Then on Sunday afternoons, Wednesday nights, and Friday nights, they would attend gospel singings at various churches. He was usually the choir director at Spring Hill, but would not let them elect a pianist. He would call on someone from the congregation to accompany him. At one time, there were sixteen pianists at that church.

Elbert served as Secretary of the Arkansas State Singing Convention in 1944 and 1945. He also served as President, then Chaplain, of the Faulkner County Singing Convention.

Ida went to be with Leonard at his Naval base during World War II, and left their daughters, Beatrice and Sue, with Elbert and Iva. During that time, the Brannons were divorced. Ida was supposed to come back and raise the girls, but met and married Douglas Emerson, and left the girls for the McCollums to care for. Elbert really loved those little tykes. Even after Eva's death, he took care of them for six months until their father came and got them.

In 1946, Iva's health worsened, and she had to have surgery. She spent 40 days at St. Vincent Hospital in Little Rock. Although she was able to be out

of bed part of the time, she had to be careful because of her high blood pressure. She had been back in the Conway hospital in October of 1947, then in January of 1948. She died at home, and was buried in Spring Hill Cemetary.

In the fall of 1948, Elbert had a bout with his nerves. His uncle, Dr. Isaac McCollum, advised him to go to Ft. Roots Veterans Hospital. They helped him, but on his release, he decided to sell his property. From then on, he lived in several places, but most of the time in Conway County.

He had a brief marriage to Sena Wilcox, which disappointed all the family.

Then, in 1973, he met and married Pearlie Mae Lawson, a widow from Morrilton. One daily ritual they had was for him to read aloud to her from the Bible. He would read four pages each day. That way, he would read through the Bible once each year, plus the Psalms twice.

On May 18, 1976, he walked to the store and bought a few groceries. At noon, he and Pearlie Mae had sat down to eat. Without any warning, he fell from his chair and was dead within seconds.

He was buried beside Iva in the Spring Hill Cemetary. His own penmanship is on his gravestone.

FANNIE ESTELLE MCCOLLUM TATE

Fannie was the third child of Sidney Barnett and Nancy Radford McCollum. She was born in Tennessee on April 13, 1892.

Being the eldest daughter, she had to take over the household chores as soon as she was big enough. She learned early how to cook and sew. As was the custom of that day, she also had to go to work in the fields.

She had lots of friends, and one special girl friend named Georgia Sims. Georgia had a brother named Luther who Fannie dated, and was considering marriage with him. That was not to be.

It seems that Georgia was dating a boy whose father had killed a man, and was serving time in prison. Luther didn't like the thought of his sister dating a "convict's son," so he decided to break them up. He got a pair of "brass knucks" to use for that purpose. Somehow, Nan found out about the scheme, and told Fannie that she couldn't see Luther any more.

The next morning, she went into the parlour to clean it, and Sid came in to talk with her. She did a lot of crying about her lost love, but she was one to honor her father and mother, so she accepted their decision.

She didn't go out with the other young people for a long while.

Sid tried to make things better for her, so knowing how much she liked flowers, he made a violet bed in the front yard and spelled out "FANNIE" with the plants. She didn't like it, but she was too sweet to hurt his feelings.

She was saved at the same revival as Sid, Elbert, and LuElla, and was baptized into the Macedonia Baptist Church. She was good with children, so it was only natural that she would teach a Sunday School class and lead the Sunbeams.

Some friends of Fannie's moved to Pangburn, Arkansas, where they met a man named Dave Tate. He was a widower with three children. After they dated awhile, they married on Christmas Day, 1914, and she moved with him to Pangburn.

Dave's older child, a daughter named Edna, lived with her grandmother, but the two boys, Gerald and Charlie, lived with Fannie and Dave. Fannie loved them as her own and they loved her in return.

They always farmed, mostly cotton. And, of course, she cooked for all the hired hands as well as her family. Her biscuits are still mentioned as being "the best."

Her two oldest children, Dennie and Louise, were born at Pangburn.

In 1920, they moved to Wynnewood, Oklahoma, where Lucille, Davine, and Rosa Lee were born. They raised alfalfa among other crops there.

They moved to other towns in Oklahoma. They were living in Ada when Sidney was born. Billy Joe was born at Dale, Oklahoma, and Edna Carol was born in Shawnee.

Fannie didn't get to go back to Arkansas and visit her family very often, but did make a trip with (Edna) Carol in the 1950's. All the nieces and nephews, who had never been around her, still talk about her terrific sense of humor.

When I asked some of her children to give me a memory of Fannie's life, I was told, "My mom was the most even-tempered person I ever met. She had a 'hard row to hoe,' but never complained. She always told her children that if they couldn't say something good about someone, to keep their mouth closed."

She was sick for a long time before she died, after strokes, which left her paralyzed, "but she never complained."

Fannie was widowed in 1954.

She died in Ada, Oklahoma on January 20, 1961. She was buried in Durant.

"AND HER CHILDREN CALLED HER BLESSED."

LUELLA MCCOLLUM KEITH

LuElla wrote her own story in 1983. However, there are some things she has shared with me that I think are interesting.

After Fannie left home, LuElla had to teach herself to sew, since there were few "bought" dresses, which were out of reach of Sid's pocketbook.

Ila needed a new dress for a school activity, so LuElla decided to make it for her. (Remember, in the early 1900's, there were no fitted patterns; just a "waist" pattern that had to be adjusted to fit all.) The material was bought, and the top was done. However, they decided on a pleated skirt. Since no one had ever explained to LuElla about measuring the pleats, pinning, then stitching, she did it by guesswork. Those pleats were taken out and resewn several times before she got them right. Both pronounced it a good job and pretty dress. From then on, she became more proficient, and by the time she needed to sew for Bonnie and Willa, she was a very good seamstress.

Most summers, when Bill got his vacation, they would drive down from Rogers to Spring Hill and visit. All the Spring Hill folks were happy to see them. We got to take out from the fields some of the time and visit with them. We all loved to hear Uncle Bill laugh. He had a big booming voice (not offensive, just happy) that made everyone laugh with him. No matter what was mentioned between the grown-ups, one of them would think of something funny that happened, in spite of apparent "hard times."

LuElla has maintained such a gentle attitude. Just being around her is a pleasure. At times, she has had to be hospitalized. However, she has never let that get her down. She had her ninetieth birthday on the 19th of August, 1984. You know something? She's still "purty as a picture."

AMY ESTHER MCCOLLUM BRANNAN

Amy Esther McCollum was born at Greenbrier, Arkansas, on October 6, 1896, the fifth child of Sidney Barnett and Nancy Radford McCollum.

She shared in all the family chores, including working in the fields, along with the others, in order to help make a living.

Another thing she and LuElla took turns doing was brushing and combing out their mother's hair. It was long and heavy; therefore, Nan would tire before she could finish it properly. Therefore, the girls were asked to be the "unofficial hairdressers."

Sid wasn't one to punish his girls by whipping them. However, one time and only one time, Amy misbehaved enough for her father to get the peach tree switch. She was only four or five years old at the time. There was a place in the horse lot where the animals wallowed when their harness was removed. When it was dry weather, it was a dust bowl. One day, when he came in from the field, Sid found Amy and LuElla sitting in the dirt, throwing it up and letting it come down upon their heads. According to Amy, Sid just went to the peach tree and taught them a lesson.

She went to Greenbrier High School, got a teacher's certificate, and taught at Spring Hill prior to her marriage.

She was saved and baptized into the Macedonia Baptist Church at Greenbrier. The night she went to the "mourner's bench," her mother came up and knelt beside her. Nan said, "This is your mother who has prayed many prayers for you."

The family moved from Greenbrier to the Spring Hill community and lived on the Nixon place.

All of the McCollum girls were considered "beauties," so when the young men of the community would get new buggies, they would drive by to try to impress one of them.

John Brannan drove his new buggy by about dinner time. Of course, the girls were impressed. Since they were having chicken that particular meal, Amy and LuElla broke the wishbone, with Amy getting the "wish." Her wish was that she could take a ride in John's new buggy. That wish came true, because the next day, he came by and took her to church.

In that community, the young men would gather and have baseball games.

That was a popular place for the young people to date. One afternoon, John asked Amy to go to the game with him. She refused. She had heard that he had been drinking some, and would not go with anyone like that. She finally told him the reason, and he promised that he would never drink again. As far as anyone knows, he kept his promise.

He soon became a Christian, and at his death, was a deacon in the Spring Hill Baptist Church.

Amy and John were married September 27, 1917. They lived all their married lives in and around Spring Hill. They were farmers.

Their first child, a son, Herman Elliott Brannan, was born on November 18, 1919. Not only was he their pride and joy, but Grandpa McCollum doted on him, since he was his closest grandchild.

One story Amy enjoyed telling about Herman was when he was quite small. He was out in the yard playing when a neighbor came by in his wagon. Instead of putting both checklines (for the wagon) in one hand and waving, he just nodded his head as a greeting. Herman ran in the house and told Amy, "Mother, that man just shook heads with me!"

Helen Montess (Tess) made her entry into the Brannan family on August 5, 1923. She was married to James Milburn Brown on March 2, 1942. They had no children. After he came back from World War II, they moved to Deming, New Mexico, and stayed several years, then moved back to Spring Hill, and lived next door to the Brannans. Milburn died in August of 1977.

Leta Joan was the next Brannan daughter. She was born November 6, 1926. She and W.D. (Joe) Hall were married on May 16, 1948. The first few years of their marriage was spent in Little Rock and Jacksonville, Arkansas, but they decided "Brannan Hill" was the place for them, so they built a house just east of John and Amy's home place. They have three daughters, Nancy Kathleen (Kathy), Carol Beth, and Mary Ann.

John Mac, the last son born to John and Amy, discovered America on October 10, 1932. He and Zebeline Colbert were married May 26, 1956. They have one son, David Allen. He chose to live in New Mexico, then in Texas.

There was lots of hard work done by all the family. Not only was the Depression on, but John had to be in the Sanitarium for T.B. part of the time. Finally, the disease was arrested, and he was able to be back home, although he had to be careful with his health.

There one could participate in a game of dominoes, Chinese checkers, or other fun things. Everyone felt comfortable in the Brannan household.

Also, at night, you could join the whole family in "learning" games. One in particular was called "buzz." The group would start counting from the number one. Whoever came to a multiple of seven would have to say "buzz," or be out of the game. Then the counting started over. It sure was a good way to learn your "times seven."

Amy was a good cook. Her "tea cakes" were perfect for hungry children just getting off a school bus. They were a nice size and not very brown. No one seems to have the exact knack on how to reproduce them. Maybe it was the wood stove, or the love that went in them. Whatever it was, I'd like to have [the recipe] to share with the other relatives who missed out on a good thing.

John and Amy celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary in September of 1967. John lived another four years. He died on November 14, 1971.

Spring Hill was a very special place for Amy. If health permitted, she never missed a service. In her younger days, when her children were still home, she walked with them to church. Later, when most everyone had cars, someone would drive her there.

She was a good Bible student and an excellent teacher. She taught Sunday School for many years, and also was the principal leader for the Women's Missionary Association. Somehow, she could present a lesson in an understandable way that anyone could learn.

In her later years, she developed Parkinson's disease, but with medication, she could do most things.

All the family that was away from Spring Hill depended on Amy's letters to keep them informed on all the family news. Even after it was hard for her to write, she tried to correspond once in a while.

On March 22, 1984, she, Tess, Joan, and Joe went to Russellville, Arkansas, to visit Carol, Joan's daughter, and her family. On the way back, she seemed extremely quiet. Then, on Friday, she had a stroke and was subsequently hospitalized. She did not have to suffer long. Her mission on this earth was fulfilled.

On March 27, 1984, she went to heaven. Her body was laid to rest in the Spring Hill Cemetary.

BARNETT ULYSSES MCCOLLUM

Barnett U., the second son of Sidney Barnett and Nancy Radford McCollum, was born at Greenbrier, Arkansas, on February 21, 1899. He grew up in a household where each member was expected to "earn their keep." He helped with the outside chores and with things he could do inside.

One of his duties, since he was the youngest son, was to care for his grandfather, Thomas McCollum, who was in a wheelchair, or bedfast, when he was at the Sidney McCollum home.

Thomas would spend about ten days at a time with Frank and Joe, two of his sons, then the other 20 days each month was spent with Sidney's family. Isaac, his doctor son, was unable to help with his daily care, so he contributed money for his upkeep.

Thomas chewed tobacco, and it became Barnett's chore to empty the "spit can." Barnett was one of his favorites, and was given a Barlow knife, a prized possession for any young boy.

Since he had to stay nearby, in case he was needed, Barnett was exposed to his grandfather's political philosophy, which he told everyone was "Socialist." Actually, it was very little more than liberal, but he enjoyed arguing politics with any visitor he had.

He attended Macdonia Baptist Church at Greenbrier. In 1912, he was saved, and was baptized in Blackfork Creek, which is east of Greenbrier.

After he graduated from Greenbrier High School, he attended Arkansas State Teachers College at Conway for two years, then taught school for two years in 1918 and 1919.

He went into the Army during World War I. However, he only served one month. He was inducted in October 1918, and the Armistice was signed in November of the same year. He laughingly remarked that the Germans heard he was coming over, so just surrendered.

In 1920, he and a friend went to the wheat harvest in Kansas. The weather was bad, and they were not getting to work for pay, so he caught a train and went to Wynnewood, Oklahoma, where he worked for Dave and Fannie Tate, bailing alfalfa the rest of the summer.

In the fall of 1920, he taught at Nahola School, which was east of Wynnewood.

By 1922, he had decided to go back to Conway and get some more college credits. In order to make a little cash, he helped Elbert cut oak timber off his 80 acres in the Cadron bottom.

He moved to Ada, Oklahoma, in 1923 to continue his education. After he had been there awhile, he encouraged Ila to come to Ada and attend the same school. They boarded at the same place at first, then he moved and slept at a funeral home. (Ila, in her autobiography, tells this part better than I.)

In August of 1923, Barnett got a job in the Ada Post Office. He worked there for more than 45 years.

It was in the Fall of 1925 that he met Fannie Mae McCain. Three months later, in January of 1926, they were married.

On August 25, 1928, a son, Sidney Barnett McCollum, was born. Then, on October 8, 1932, their second son, Robert Gordon, made his appearance. Their only daughter, Virginia Ruth, was born on February 9, 1938.

His spiritual life has always been very important. Many young men would have hesitated to become active in a different church in a community of strangers, but Barnett was soon a member of the church choir at the First Baptist Church in Ada. He was the teacher for the Adult Sunday School class for many years.

Neither of his children chose to stay in Ada, so, after his retirement in 1969, he and Fannie started travelling, visiting their children in various parts of the country. They also spend some time at Spring Hill with the Arkansas kin each year.

Every so often, the Arkansas and Oklahoma kin meet at their house in Ada and have a mini-reunion. His dry humor and funny stories is one of the highlights of the visit.

He couldn't have picked a better wife. Fannie Mae has been such an inspiration to the family with her loving, hospitable ways. She is one of the few persons I've known who acts as if an extra mouth or two is "no trouble at all."

There is a saying that "you can pick your friends, but you are born with your relatives." If God had asked me to pick an uncle and aunt, I'd have chosen Barnett and Fannie Mae. To all the nieces and nephews, they are NUMBER ONE!

ILA ETHEL MCCOLLUM ZELLNER

Ila did a good job writing her life story. However, there are some things she omitted that, to me, are interesting and should be shared.

She was the youngest. Therefore, she was the one who stayed in the house with her mother while she was so sick.

Nan would not let her children read anything that was uncomplimentary to preachers. However, kids being kids, when her back was turned, or, in this instance, when she was asleep, Ila would take a book, go to the kitchen, and read. Two of the "forbidden books" were The Scarlet Letter and The Shepherd of the Hills, both of which Elbert had brought home. She read lots of other books, too.

One of the teachers at Greenbrier School started a "Literary Guild" to give the students a learning place to go. To make sure the ones who came were there for the right purpose, she charged a nickel to attend. Nan was so intent on Ila getting to go to the "Guild," that on the day before she died, she gave her the money, and told her to "go ahead." Another proof of Nan's unselfishness.

Ila tells of her "romantic ideas" when Radford was born. She was propped up on some pillows, holding the baby by her side, when Bernard came in to see his son for the first time. She was expecting him to tell her how much he loved her for having "our son," and was totally unprepared for his first remark, "You're going to love him better than me!"

She was a good mother. Since I was there several times a week to play with her children, I marvel at her patience. When it was too bad to play outside, we would play "hide the spoon" or "singing convention." We had "quartets," "trios," or just plain "directors," depending on whom we had seen or heard the past few weeks.

She still knows how to make the grandchildren and grand-dads happy.

When God set His standard for women, He must have had Ila, and those like her, in mind.

LU ELLA MCCOLLUM KEITH

By: Lu Ella

March 30, 1983

My girls have insisted for some time that I write something of my life's history for them and my grandchildren and for my great grandchildren.

I discovered America about 6 miles northeast of Greenbrier, Arkansas, August 19th, 1894.

My parents, Sidney Barnett McCollum and Nan Radford McCollum, were both born in Tennessee -- Daddy at McKenzie, and Mother at Martin, where she lived until her marriage, February 26, 1885. They lost their first baby, Beatrice, when small, of pneumonia. They had six other children: Elbert and Fannie were born in Tennessee. Then they came to Faulkner County, Arkansas, where the other four were born: me in 1894, Amy in 1896, Barnett in 1899, and Ila in 1901.

Uncle John Blair, Daddy's uncle by marriage, had come to Arkansas earlier and had a large farm 6 miles from Greenbrier. Uncle John was Postmaster at Moore (between Greenbrier and Wooly Hollow State Park). A man on horseback carried the mail from Greenbrier to Moore, and on to Quitman. This office was discontinued many years ago. Daddy rented land from Uncle John, and we lived in a little rent house on his farm till I was 8 years old, when we moved to Greenbrier. We rented from Mrs. Mary Sims, Ara Smith's mother, for about 8 years, then we lived in 2 other houses before Daddy bought a small farm just on the east edge of the then town of Greenbrier. The house was just south of the church which at the present time is called First Baptist Church of Greenbrier.

I first started school at Blair schoolhouse, a little one-room school, and had as teachers one Mrs. Lula Moore, and H.B. Hardy, who became an M.D., and also served in the Arkansas Legislature. Greenbrier school had two rooms then -- the big room, and the little room. The rooms were the same size, but the children weren't. The school expanded and built a 3- room building on the grounds of the present school at Greenbrier, later expanded to a gym and 2 more rooms, and added a High School, and under the leadership of J.S. Williams, as teacher in High School. I was graduated from High School in 1912-13. I won a dictionary that day for best speller. I also delivered the Valedictorian Address -- I was the only girl in the class with 3 boys. I had had a grad companion, Rose Patterson from Bee Branch, but she dropped out before school was out.

Well, my mother had been in poor health for several years, and she died November 1, 1913. Sister Fannie assumed the role of chief cook and bottle washer for one year, then Christmas of 1914 she was married to Dave Tate of Pangburn, Arkansas. Amy, Ila, and Barnett were all still in school, so it fell my lot to assume the duties of head housekeeper. I had taken the examination (county) for teacher's license to teach school. I had taught a little 2-months summer school, had a second-grade license, but had not had a chance to get a contract to teach when my sister Fannie married and left, so it fell on me to see that the

younger ones could go on to school. I tried to carry on, working in the fields and keeping house. When Mother was living, but sickly, she taught sister Fannie to sew and cook, but I was always in the field, or going to school. I had to cook some meals planned by somebody else, but all the sewing I had ever been allowed to do was sew a straight seam in sheets. We had brown muslin sheets with a seam right down the middle. Muslin bleached out soon and was much preferred to the already-bleached. In our small town, there were no dress patterns for sale, and if you wanted anything special, you only had a plain pattern, and you had to add all the extras. Maybe it didn't fit everyone either. Well, that was what I inherited when Fannie left. You could not get anybody to sew for you, and if I could, I could not afford it, so I had the responsibility of sewing for myself and my two younger sisters. I don't claim that the garments looked tailor-made or anything like that, but we got by.

Amy taught at Spring Hill after the family moved to Spring Hill in 1916. She married John Brannon in 1917. Barnett and Ila went on and then each had some college. Barnett went to Oklahoma and taught in Oklahoma and went to college at Ada and married his wife, Fannie Mae McCain, there in 1926.

The work on the farm was still a big part of my life. I had some social life, but always responsibility. Brother Elbert went in the Army in 1917. While he was in the Army, Daddy bought the place where Ila lives now, and where I was married (a new house has been built since then). He and Elbert divided the farm. Elbert married Iva Martin, a widow with two daughters, and built a house on his part of the land about 1929 or 1930.

I had been housekeeper for all this time. Elbert made it pretty hard for me after Amy married and Barnett was away in school, etc. Ila and I were at home, but Ila was not well much of the time. Elbert had big ideas and he always had hired hands. If they didn't stay there all the time, he hired them by the day, and I had to cook dinner for them, along with all my other work, and at no pay!

Well, I was getting up in my twenties. I had had my share of dates in my younger days, and never was really interested in any of them. After we moved to Spring Hill, I had dates, too, but none I could relate to very much. I had some real good friends, but just friends. Well, I began to see my girl friends getting married (made wedding dresses for two, and stood up as maid of honor for two), and I still didn't have a steady. I received a proposal from a widower with three children. (Wasn't interested.) Another older man was very persistent, but I wasn't interested.

I had gotten acquainted with the Reynolds girls, Delsie and Edith, who had moved to Spring Hill, and we became friends. They didn't live there long until their daddy decided to move to Rogers, Arkansas. I had gotten a brochure from Rogers about that time (that was from the Chamber of Commerce, I'm sure), but it was very interesting to me.

When Delsie was getting ready to go, I made the remark that I'd been reading about Rogers, and I thought I'd like to live there. I soon forgot what I'd said, but Delsie, teasing, had said, "I'll try to find you a man up there." Well, here goes my story.

Bill Keith's family had moved to Rogers in 1911, but Bill was grown and away from home, working for a farmer in Linaus, Mo., so he did not come to Rogers to live. He worked for one of his mother's uncles and aunts, except for one year he went to Ray's (Rahe's) Auto and Tractor School in Kansas City. He entered World War I in 1917 and served in the war, then in the Army of Occupation until 1919. He came to Rogers and stayed awhile and worked at the Vinegar Factory. He went to Lyons, Kansas, and worked in the salt mines awhile. In early 1921, his mother got sick, and he had to come home. She got better, but he stayed on and worked in the woodworking shop for Gene Van Wagner, where he learned his hobby of woodworking. He was working there when he met Delsie Reynolds. Delsie's sister, Erma, and Bill's sister, Mabel, had become very good friends. Delsie was quite friendly to Bill. She said he was so lonely. He thought he was a little old for some of Mabel's friends, and he had not met any his own age. So, Delsie told him about me and asked him to write me -- just because he was lonely, mind you. She and I had corresponded since she left Spring Hill, and she knew I was lonely, too. In March, 1922, I got a letter from Mr. W.L. Keith, of Rogers, Arkansas. Delsie had sent me a small picture of him. I got the letter and thought, well, just to please her, I'd answer it. Well, I got another letter the next week. Well, somehow I kind of liked the idea of a friendly correspondence, and we kept writing every week all summer. Bill went to Kansas to the wheat harvest that summer, but he'd write to me every Sunday. He told me (after we were married) that he walked about sixteen miles on Sunday while he was out there just to get my letter. I really looked forward to his letters, too. He just seemed different from the boys I had dated before. While he was in Kansas, Uncle Sam gave the former soldiers a bonus. He got enough to buy a Model T Ford car. He came back to Rogers in the Fall and didn't have a job. He had taken an examination in March for a Rural Mail Carrier, but had never heard from it. When he came back from Kansas, he worked for Gene Van Wagner again, but was not making very much -- mostly just experience.

Delsie Reynolds married Elmer Beene and they were good friends with Bill, so she suggested that they all come to see us. She had relatives there in the neighborhood, so about November 1, 1922, they came down. The road over the mountain, in that day, can scarcely be imagined, but the rest of the road was not bad. They wrote me that they were coming. I didn't know what to expect really, but I felt like I knew Bill pretty well by our letters. I had a good dinner prepared, always did on Sunday anyway. It was kind of stiff at first getting acquainted. We drove around some that afternoon, and all went to Conway to church that night. By then the stiffness had kind of worn off, and we enjoyed being together. He wanted to stay awhile, so he got a job working for our very good friend, Mr. John Tom Milam, who was clearing some land to put out a peach orchard. He came to see me some of the nights when he wasn't too tired. It was just "over the hill", some quarter of a mile or so, where he worked. I guess the Milams gave him a pretty good recommendation of me. (I had made their daughter Modena's wedding dress, and we had been good friends.) Anyway, about two weeks after he came, Bill asked me to marry him. By then, I felt like I'd known him always, and loved to be in his company, and enjoyed making him laugh. So, I said YES. I knew I loved him, because I wanted to be with him all the time. I didn't know how my Daddy would get along without me, but he was willing. I told Bill I would appreciate it if he would do Daddy the courtesy of asking for me. I was 28 years old and didn't have to have his consent. Bill said he would. He had learned to like my dad by then, too. Daddy had had an accident a month or so before that and was using crutches to walk, so while I was doing some chores, Daddy was sitting by the big fireplace with his crutches by his chair. Bill went in and talked to him a little bit, then picked up his crutches and laid them back on the bed, and then asked him if he had any objections to us getting married. Daddy was very sweet about it and told him he didn't object. Daddy always laughed that Bill put his crutches out of reach before asking. Delsie and Elmer had visited until they were ready to go back to Rogers, so we decided to get married December 2nd, on Saturday night, then start to Rogers on Tuesday following.

We were married at the home of a good neighbor, Mr. W.T. Matthews. My Springhill pastor, Rev. Press H. Glover, had preached at the church that day, and was spending the night there, and would preach again the next day. So Delsie and Elmer, my sister Ila, and a cousin, Orean McCollum, who was spending the night with us, drove about a quarter of a mile to Mr. Matthew's home and got the preacher to perform the ceremony. We went to church the next day and told the good news. Sister Amy didn't know it until that morning. We didn't have good telephone service, and she lived a couple of miles away. Well, Bill had told his folks in Rogers that we were being married and would be there sometime that week. We spent Sunday night with the Milams. They fell in love with Bill while he was staying with them and working. After we were married and came back to Spring Hill in the summers, the Milams always insisted on us staying one night with them. We had a pretty busy day Monday getting ready to leave Tuesday, and it poured down rain about all day. The gang at Spring Hill were organized to chivalry us on Monday night, but it rained so hard they had to call it off. Well, come Tuesday morning, it had quit raining, so we set forth on our way to Rogers (and our honeymoon) with our friends Delsie and Elmer Beene (they were going home). We were young and much in love, and all the things that happened to us were funny or amusing, and we had a great time. The Beenes had only been married a few months, so we had our honeymoons together, I guess. Delsie had a grandmother at Hasty, somewhere near Western Grove, so when we got to Russellville, we decided to go north and see her grandmother at Hasty (they had come down the mountain from Fayetteville and didn't much want to go back that way). Remember this is 1922 and the road was pretty good to Mountainsburg -- but from there to Fayetteville, it was just an unimproved mountain road, if you can imagine that. Anyway, we decided to go north from Russellville,and go by and see her grandmother at Hasty. As I said, it had rained all day Monday, and when we started north to Dover, we found newly-worked roads and ruts that you could hardly find the bottom. Well, we broke a spring on the old Ford on those rough roads, so we only got about 7 miles north of Russellville till we had to spend the night (Tuesday night). We had to stop at a blacksmith shop to get another spring. When we stopped to spend the night, we had come to a fairly prosperous-looking home, and we asked if we could spend the night. They very graciously took us in. They gave us a good country supper and breakfast and clean beds, and didn't even want us to pay them anything.

After supper, we were sitting around the big fireplace (December 5, 1922), and 3 kind of suspicious looking men came in. I could tell by the conversation they were not the kind of folks we were staying with, but nothing happened. After they were gone, our host said they were moon-shiners and had seen our car, and they were checking to see if we were "revenuers" that might be looking for them. Anyway, I didn't sleep too good that night. I didn't know what we might get into. Well, Wednesday morning, we were on our way again. We got to Lurton by noon and got some cheese and crackers at the grocery store (that is all you could get to eat at a grocery store in those days), and there were no restaurants in that part of the world -- no motels either. It was before their day. Well, we inquired about how to get to Hasty, for that's where we planned to spend the night. The grocer said, " You go out here about a mile and take a right -- go down the mountain." He said, "It is about 20 miles that way, but if you go on (told how), it will be about 60 miles." He said, "You'll cuss me for sending you that way, but you'll cuss me if you go the long way, too." Well, we went the short way, but it started raining again. Just as we were ready to turn to our right, we had to wait a few minutes. Two men were driving 4 big mules to a wagon with a bale of cotton in the raw (that is, before it was ginned and baled). It took 4 big mules to pull that wagon up the mountain. Well, here we were, ready to go down the mountain, but we hadn't gone far until Bill insisted that we all but him get out, and walk down, because he was afraid his brakes (on an old Ford) would not hold. Imagine how I felt to get out and leave my sweetie in so much danger, but Delsie and Elmer and I got out. He would go a little ways and the car would get on a high center. He'd wait till we caught up and put rocks under the wheels to raise it up, then he'd go till it happened again. I don't know how many times that happened (I guess that is when we wanted to cuss that grocer). It was pouring down rain all this time, too, but we finally made it down the mountain. Bill had a trench coat in the car that I put on while in the rain, but Delsie and Elmer didn't have much protection. We breathed a sigh of relief when we hit bottom, but from then on for I don't know how many miles, we had to cross a little old creek, between the two mountains. It was still raining, and every time we crossed it, it got a little bigger. We crossed it more than 20 times. The last time we crossed, it was so wide, and we had no idea how deep. Bill was afraid we'd stall in it. There were some men over on the other side, so Bill hollered and asked them if they thought he could cross. They told him how to go, and they said they thought he could make it. They said if he didn't, they'd get a team and pull us out. Bill, being such a good driver, followed their instructions and made it OK. It was getting late in the afternoon by then, and we were still a good ways from Hasty, but we didn't have any more mountains or so many creeks to cross. We just had country roads not traveled a lot. We got to Hasty about 9 or 9:30, tired and hungry. Delsie's grandmother lived with her daughter and her husband. They had all gone to bed, but got up, made supper for us and made beds for us. Were we ever ready for both. This was Wednesday night. We had been on the road two days and one night. We didn't leave real early the next morning, but drove to Western Grove where Bill had another spring put on the car and some other work done, so it was afternoon before we left there. Delsie had some relatives there, so we visited with them while the men got the car in shape again.

We left there after noon, and got to Eureka Springs about nine o'clock. Imagine going into Eureka Springs in those days, never been there before, and didn't know what to expect. Well, we just kept going down hill, down, down, till we finally found the Land-Acre Hotel, and we stayed the rest of the night there. The next morning, it was coming a "norther" after all the rain, and that is farther north than North Little Rock. It really got cold. This was Friday morning. We had left Conway at 8 o'clock Tuesday morning. We got to Bill's folks' home just before 12 o'clock. It sounds like we had problems. We did, but we were in love and we were together. It was just an adventure, and it was fun, in spite of all the problems we had. Well, I had to get acquainted with Bill's folks, but they just took me to their hearts, and we always got along real well. They had to get acquainted with me, too.

We stayed in the house with them for a month -- had a room upstairs. In the meantime, though, Bill had gotten notice that they were putting on a new mail route, and he had gotten the appointment as carrier. An old man and his wife that knew Bill real well came over one day. He said his wife was getting to where she needed help sometimes, and she had two sons who lived in Waycross, Georgia. They wanted them to move down there so they could take care of them. So this old man told us that if we would buy their place, we could give a note for the whole thing -- not a penny down, and we could pay it out in payments like we'd like to pay it. Most of the furniture was old, but they said we could take what we wanted and include that in the note. We didn't take much of the furniture, the stoves, bed, and a few other things. All was included in the note, which came to $1761.30.

We added a piece of furniture now and then as we could manage to pay for it. The mail route was not very long. They paid by the mile, and it had just been changed from a horse-and-buggy route to a motor vehicle route. We paid $50.00 a month on the note for one year. By then, the old Ford had about seen its last days, so we had to have a new car. We cut the payments down, I don't remember how much. We had a pretty hard time meeting all those payments, but they added some miles to his route and made better roads. Se we managed. We went without new clothes and everything but the bare necessities till we got on our feet. We were happy, and glad he had a good job, so we didn't fret at all. When he retired in 1956, his route was 58 miles.

We joined First Baptist Church and the B.Y.P.U., and just enjoyed ourselves in spite of our poverty. We finally got the house paid for, and in 1931 and 1932, Bill remodeled the house. It was four large rooms to start with. He made it into a bungalow with two bedrooms, large living room, bath, kitchen, and dining room, and a large glassed-in sleeping porch all across the back, except for the utility room at one end.

We had wanted a baby, but I know the Lord knew we had not been ready for one, but in 1929, on August 12, He gave us Bonnie Sue. Three years later, Willa Lu. We were so happy to have them, and I'm sure Bill never regretted not having a boy. He was so proud of his girls. We were so proud of both of them, and thoroughly enjoyed watching them grow up, going through all the ups and downs that life provides for all.

We were active in First Baptist Church for many years, but there came a pastor we could not relate to very well; and many others in the church felt the same. It finally came to a showdown, and 9 or 10 deacons and their families left the church, with many more members besides. In 1941, we all decided to organize another church. We organized in June 1941 with 65 charter members, and became Immanual Baptist (Southern Baptist) Church. Bill put in an awful lot of manual work there, as well as teaching, serving as a deacon, and everything else. I had some part in this, too. I was primary superintendent for several years, was Women's Missionary President, and finally teacher of a women's class. We loved everybody in that church with a special love, because we felt like we had suffered together and built together. I still have a very special place in my heart for Immanuel Church. It is very interesting to read the 40-year history of this church, and see how God's hand was in it all.

Bill retired January 1, 1957. We moved to North Little Rock in June 1957, and lived at 602 West 51st Street. We joined Park Hill Baptist Church that summer and made some very good friends.

Bill passed away December 16, 1970, and I sold our home and moved away March 12, 1971. I was in the hospital a week, and stayed a week or two with Willa. I had signed up to get into Willow House when it opened (which was expected to happen in the Spring of that year), so I stayed until July 12 with Bonnie's family. All the children helped me move in and get located. I've been here, very well satisfied, as I had several good friends who moved in when I did.

I have done ceramics and crafts, and have made afghans for the bazaars. I joined the Rhythm Band, which I have enjoyed very much, and have made several long trips, going to the Bahamas, South Carolina, Florida, New Orleans, and others. I attended one session of Chautauqua at Ridgecrest, North Carolina, and one at Glorietta, New Mexico.

Well, the rest is history the girls can tell themselves. I still love those girls and thank them so much for giving me two sons-in-law that I think quite well of, and all the grandchildren are just grand. Now just look at all the great grands -- so dear, every one of them.

It has been a great life. The Lord has greatly blessed me, and I thank Him for everyone in my family, and pray a blessing on each one, and hope you all live to be a blessing to the world we live in.